

## THE CONCEPT OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT IN IBN KHALDUN'S THOUGHT

Neneng Sulastri

Program Studi Pendidikan Guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (PGMI)  
Fakultas Agama Islam Universitas Nusantara Bandung Indonesia

nenengsulastri@uninus.ac.id

### Abstract

As a pioneer of the science of Sociology, in addition to reviewing the civilization of humanity from time to time, Ibn Khaldun often discussed the state and leadership. By laying down the principles of procedures for maintaining the existence of the state, he stressed that the dynamics and ups and downs of the state is a necessity. He then formulated this theory as Cycle Theory; that is a situation where a country experiences rapid progress at one time and will experience a setback and even collapse at another time. Departing from this, Ibn Khaldun often explained the importance of supporting elements of government. One of the most important elements in the state order according to Ibn Khaldun in his works is the figure of a leader. The ruler has an important role in maintaining the stability and sustainability of the country. One of the interesting things from other elements of forming a country is the concept of *Asabiya*. This concept plays an important role in determining the position of a ruler, determining state policy, even recruiting and eliminating elements whose benefits can be considered in the continuity of the state.

**Keywords:** state; government; *Asabiya*

### A. INTRODUCTION

Medieval times in Islamic history, is a century full of thinkers and thoughts in various fields (Kassab, 2009, p. 163). One of the thinkers (experts) at that time was Ibn Khaldun, an Islamic thinker who was a genius and famous in modern intellectual circles. In Ibn Khaldun's works, his mastery of various scientific disciplines, such as history, sociology, and politics, can be seen so that it is not surprising that Ibn Khaldun is categorized as a historian, sociologist, and political expert (Fromherz, 2011, p. 156). In fact, many people say that Ibn Khaldun is the most important and most respected creature in the universe (Zainuddin, 1992, p. 55).

Islamic scholarship works from time to time has spawned many branches of scientific discipline and thought. All aspects of life from the smallest such as the rules in defecating to the largest aspects such as state life have been determined by the corridors and regulations in Islam (Goitein, 2010, p. xxii). Likewise the rules of being a good citizen to become a just leader cannot be separated from the discussion about leadership in Islam (Lovat & Moghadam, 2017, p. 163).

Ibn Khaldun is a figure who contributed a lot in the discourse of the development of world civilization (Halim et al., 2018), especially Muslims. In presenting his political concept, Ibn Khaldun could not be separated from the reality faced and experienced. On the one hand he saw the ties of community, state and civilization in general as something that developed apart from religion, but on the other hand Ibn Khaldun was a Muslim and of course greatly influenced his attitude in looking at the problems of God, humans and society (Khalidun, & Lawrence, 2005).

The concepts and theories set out in his magnum opus, *Muqaddimah*, have inspired to the Western and Islamic intellectuals to develop civilization. British historian, A.J. Toynbee called *Muqaddimah* a very valuable monumental work (Khaldûn, 2015, p. vii). Even Misbâh alÂmily made Ibn Khaldun's thought a variable in conducting comparative studies between Arabic thought and Greek thought (Misbâh, 1988, pp. 5–8). In addition, many sociologists, philosophers, historians and political experts who praised the greatness and breadth of his insights.

In presenting his political concept, Ibn Khaldun could not be separated from the reality faced and experienced. On the one hand he saw the ties of community, state and civilization in general as something that developed apart from religion, but on the other hand Ibn Khaldun was a Muslim and of course greatly influenced his attitude in looking at the problems of God, humans and society. This paper will try to illustrate the concepts offered by Ibn Khaldun regarding state and government.

## **B. METHOD**

This paper uses library method in describing data. The works of scholar were used for constructing the phenomena. Deep analysis was produced after connecting all of the works and placed them in the result and discussion section. The conclusion was generated from the result and discussion.

## **C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Biography of Ibn Khaldun**

His full name is Abdurrahman Abu Zaid who later got the title Waliyyuddin, he was born in Tunisia at the beginning of the month of Ramadan 732 H. (1332 AD) and died in Cairo Egypt on the 25th of Ramadan 808 H. (1406 H). Ibn Khaldun was a prominent Muslim figure, in fact, in his day he was known as a pioneering scientist who treated history as a science and provided reasons to support the facts that occurred (K. J. Ahmad, 1996, p. 421).

Ibn Khaldun is also well-known as a scientist in sociology, economics, politics, and has also been plunged into practical politics (Alatas, 2014, p. 158). It all cannot be separated from his background who had become a politician, intellectual, as well as aristocratic (Moss, 1996, p. 85). Even before moving to Africa, his family had been a political leader in the Spanish Moors. Ibn Khaldun's education began with his own father who acted as the first teacher (Al-Azmeh, 2012, p. 4). Then learn languages to Abu Abdillah Muhammad Ibn al-Arabi al-Husairi, Abu al-Abbas Ahmad Ibn al-Qushar, and Abu Abdillah al-Wadiyashi. Studying fiqh with Abi Abdillah Muhammad alJiyani and Abu al-Qassim Muhammad al-Qashir. In addition, Ibn Khaldun also studied logic, theology, mathematics, and also astronomy with Abu Abdillah Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim al-Arabi (al-Tanji, 1951, p. 10).

Since childhood, Ibn Khaldun was involved in intellectual activities in his hometown, as well as watching closely political life. His grandfather had served as finance minister in Tunis, while his own father was an administrator and military officer (Browning & Bunge, 2009, p. 189). Ibn Khaldun in his childhood was more interested in the world of science. At a relatively young age, he has mastered history, sociology and several classical sciences (Z. Ahmad, 2004, p. 119).

At the end of his life, he was no longer interested in the glamor of world life (Faghirzadeh, 2008, p. 118). In fact, there were so many political positions he refused, because he wanted to concentrate on intellectual contributions. His vast experience became an important

material for him to compile his theories and points in the *Muqaddimah* and several other books that became references in the history of human civilization.

## 2. The works of Ibn Khaldun

Although Ibn Khaldun lived at a time when Islamic civilization began to experience destruction or according to Nurcholiz Madjid, at a time when Muslims had experienced an anti-climax of the development of his civilization, but he was able to appear as a creative Muslim thinker, which gave birth to great thoughts as outlined in some of his works, almost all original and pioneering (Madjid, 1997, p. 152).

Here are some of Ibn Khaldun's famous works, including:

- a. *Kitab al-I'bar wa Dhuan al-Mubtada 'wa al-Khabar fi Ayyam alA'rab wa al-Ajam wa al-Barbar wa man 'Asharahiim min Dzawi al-Suthan al-Akbar*. The work which is seen from the title has a high style of poetry can be translated into; Book examples and records of the origins and events of the Arabian, Persian, Barbarian and contemporaries of those who possessed great power. Because the title is too long, people often refer to it as *al-barlbar* only, or sometimes it is simply called the *Tarikh of Ibn Khaldun* (Maarif, 1996, p. 12).
- b. The Book of *Muqaddimah Ibn Khaldun*. In the volume of seven volumes, the study contained so broadly concerned with social problems, the Khaldunian tended to regard it as an encyclopedia (Suharto, 2003, p. 65).
- c. *Kitab al-Ta'rif Ibn Khaldun wa Rihlatuhu Garban wa Syarqan* is the complete autobiography of Ibn Khaldun in which he is seen as a medieval great man who most perfectly left his life history (al-Khudairi, 1987, p. 29).
- d. Other Works

In addition to the works mentioned above, Ibn Khaldun actually has other works such as: *Burdah al-Bushairi*, about logic and arithmetic and some resumes of jurisprudence. Meanwhile there are still two works of Ibn Khaldun which still have been preserved, namely an overview written by Ibn Khaldun with his own hand, titled *Lubab al-Muhashal fi Usul ad-Din*. And the book *Syifa al-Sailfi Tahdzib al-Massat*, written by Ibn Khaldun when he was in Fez, is the first work that talks about scholastic theology and the second works discusses conventional mysticism (Suharto, 2003, p. 68).

## 3. The Concept of State and Government according to Ibn Khaldun's Thoughts

Ibn Khaldun put forward a discussion of political philosophy, namely in his study of the form of the State, various state institutions and the character of power in dynasties and Islamic States. This study is described starting from the twenty-fifth chapter to twenty-eight *al-Muqaddimah*. In this article the *khilafah* or *immamah* and its conditions are discussed, the transition from caliphate to kingdom, *bai'at*, position as crown prince, title of *amir al-mu'minin*, ranking of kings and sultans, occupations and taxation and the State secretariat (al-Khudairi, 1987, p. 164).

### a. Community and State

Society, state and civilization ties in general are something that grows and sinks apart from whether religion in the sense of prophecy comes or not, because it recognizes that many civilizations and countries grow and sink without being visited by the teachings of the

prophet. For Khaldun, the existence of society, state and civilization does not depend on the existence of religion. Although on the other hand Khaldun is a person who is marked by the teachings of the Islamic religion, especially Jurisprudence and interpretation. This affects his attitude towards God, humans and society (Noer, 1998, p. 70).

Ibn Khaldun has distinguished between society and state. According to ancient Greek thought that state and society are identical. As for Khaldun, he argues that due to the nature and nature of the event, humans need society, meaning that humans need cooperation between their peers to be able to live; both to get food and defend themselves. Even though there are differences between the state and society, the two cannot be separated. The state is connected with the holder of power which in his day was called the *dawlah*, was a form of society. As the shape of an object that can not be separated from the contents, so also the situation with the state and society. The society in question is a settled society, which has shaped civilization, not one that is still wandering around like a nomadic life in the desert (Noer, 1998, p. 71).

According to Khaldun, the life of the desert is not yet called the State. The state contains civilization and this is only possible with a settled life. The state must also contain power, sedentary life encourages the will to rule and this power is the basis for the differentiation of the State and society.

#### **b. The State and Its Development throughout History**

According to Khaldun, a state is a living thing that is born, blooms old and eventually is destroyed. The country has an age like the rest of life. Khaldun argues that the age of a country is three generations, which is around 120 years. One generation is calculated for a person's normal age of 40 years. The three generations are (al-Khudairi, 1987, p. 168):

- 1) The first generation, living in primitive conditions that were harsh and far from luxury and city life, still lived in the countryside and the desert.
- 2) The second generation, succeeded in gaining power and establishing a country, so that this generation shifted from the harsh primitive life to the city life that was full of luxury.
- 3) The third generation, the country experienced destruction, because this generation sank into luxury, timid and lost the meaning of honor, dignity and courage.

#### **c. The country in its development through five stages:**

- 1) State Establishment Stage; stage to achieve goals, conquer all obstacles and obstacles, control of power. The state itself will not be upright except with *ashabiyah*. Khaldun argues that *ashabiyah* makes people unite efforts for the same goal, defend themselves and reject or defeat the enemy.
- 2) Concentration Stage of Power; concentration of power is a natural tendency in humans. At that time the holder of power saw that his power was already established so he would try to destroy the *ashabiyah*, monopolize power and bring down the *ashabiyah* members from the wheel of government.
- 3) Stage of Emptiness and Relaxation; stage to enjoy the fruits of power along with human nature, such as accumulating wealth, dedicating relics and achieving grandeur. The country at this stage is at the peak of its development.
- 4) Submission and Laziness; at this stage, the state is static, nothing changes, the state seems to be waiting for the beginning of the end of the story.

- 5) Spree Phase and Spread of Wealth; the country has entered its age and has been plagued by a chronic illness which is almost inevitable and continues to collapse.

It should be noted that Ibn Khaldun was a politician who understood very well the political world of Islam in the fourteenth century. Seeing the collapse and weakness that befell the Islamic world in general at the time, and observing for themselves the decline of Arab-Islamic culture in Andalusia under pressure from Spanish forces, it is not surprising when he believes that everything will be destroyed (al-Khudairi, 1987, p. 184).

#### 4. Politics in the View of Ibn Khaldun

Ibn Khaldun had the belief that power must exist in society, to maintain its existence and regulate the system of *muamalah* interactions between them. In its concept, power must be based on *'ashabiyah* (solidarity), where a group of people who have an agreement to establish power have the same commitment. *'Ashabiyah* is not only because of blood ties, but can be with agreements, common fate and background. It's just that, it must be recognized that the lineage (lineage) is crucial in the regeneration of power. The coup d'état from the *Khilafah* system to the royal system after Ali made Ibn Khaldun even more convinced of the significance of his *abi ashabiyah* concept (al-Jâbiry, 1995, p. 256).

Departing from this concept, a country built on the principle of *'ashabiyah* descent will only last for four generations. Because up to the fourth generation, *'ashabiyah* will fade and its country will collapse. For the next stage, power will shift to groups that have other *'ashabiyah*.

This thesis departs from the rise and fall of the country in the past that adheres to the royal system. As he stated: "*Know that the kingdom is the goal of the 'ashabiyah character whose regeneration process is not by election, but by successive lineage.*" This will be different if the system adopted is a republic, where power does not lie in a particular group, but lies in the people.

Based on some of the explanations above, explained that in theory Ibn Khaldun's state is more inclined towards the process of stabilization and maintaining the sustainability of the country. The things he emphasized were concepts and theories so that a country could run well. He also laid many cornerstones in the discussion of state typologies that could later be used as historical references, such as types of state politics, characteristics of state dynamics, binding systems that can affect state stability, and others.

Such is the explanation of the political paradigm of Muslim scientists who were known globally from time to time, Ibn Khaldun. Although we missed a lot in presenting the material, the above description can at least clarify the dichotomy between the biases of thought; is it more towards power (leaders) or towards the urgency of the state.

#### D. CONCLUSION

Ibn Khaldun's thoughts which have crystallized in his works, greatly influenced the format of civilization in society. Its greatness for centuries turned out to be inviting comments from various circles. Not a few who praise and admire his work, both from the Orientalist and Islamic thinkers themselves. Anyone cannot deny the great role played by Ibn Khaldun in raising the prestige of Islamic thought.

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